English Language Cooperative Teachers' Roles as Perceived By Student Teachers

Dr. Majid Mohammad Al-Khataybeh

Abstract

This study aims at investigating the most effective roles that cooperative teachers practice from their student teachers' perspectives. The sample of the study comprised (15) cooperative teachers and (35) seniors of English language field student teachers at al-Karak educational directorate. A likert type questionnaire of (6) domains was constructed and validated as well, with a reliability of (0.854).

Results showed that the role as of a curriculum specialist scores the highest. Meanwhile, the lowest frequency role was the friendship. Also, there were no statistical differences due to gender. Finally, the current study has addressed some recommendations and some suggestions to be considered by researchers later.

أدوار معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية المتعاونين من وجهة نظر طلبة التربية العملية في الأردن

ا لمخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إ استقصاء الأدوار ال ارسها ا علمون ا تعاونون من وجهة نظر الطلبة ا علمون ا لتحقون برنامج التربية العملية مدارس التربية والتعليم افظة الكرك جنوب الأردن الفصل الدراسي الأول ،للعام الدراسي ٩٩/٢٠٠٠م. تكونت عينة الدراسة من (١٥) معلما متعاو نا (٢٥) طالبـا معلما من مستوى السنة الرابعة صص معلم ال اللغة الإ ليزية جامعة مؤته.

قام الباحث ببناء استبانه من (٥٠) فقرة على مقياس ليكرت. وقد التأكد من ا صائص السيكومتريـة للاستبانة، حيث أظهرت نتائج ليل الثبات أن معامل الثبات كان (٠,٨٤٥). أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن دور ا علم ا تعاون كان اكثر مكانة من حيث كون ا علم خب ا نهاج، بينما الدور الأقل مكانة هو دور ا علم كصديق للطالب ا علم. هذا ولقد أشارت الدراسة إ عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالـه إحصائيـة تعـزى إ ا نس. ولقد خضت الدراسة عن موعة من التوصيات للمهتم وا تخصص .

Introduction

The major goal of the educational practicum program is to prepare prospective

teachers and help them to understand their chosen careers by presenting selected facts, ideas, themes and duties. As future teachers can identify more strongly with teaching as a field of study, as well as, need to see connections between pre- service study and professio-nal practices. Practicum has been empha-sized especially in teaching foreign lang-uages .

The majority of practitioners in this field are cooperative teachers and student teachers, because they are the parties who are prepared for the practicum and training (Spaulding, 1995). So, it has become essential to study the role relatio-nship between both English language cooperative teachers and student teachers.

Background of the Study

The cooperative teacher is viewed as the colleague of the student teacher as he is more experienced due to his teaching for a long time. So it is expected that cooperative teachers be in a position to help the student teachers to start easily and confidently in classroom sessions.

A cooperative teacher helps in imple-menting the educational practicum plans as he clarifies the text and its objectives, shows the availability of the educational aids in the school and then guides and supervises the student teacher to achieve the desired aims. As so , the cooperative teacher role is crucial as well because he is the model who guides the student teacher (Schaible and Robinson, 1995; Piper,1988).

It is clearly seen that the student teacher benefit from the cooperative teacher through varied ways; he may get knowledge about the learner's level and become familiar with the weaknesses and problems of the teaching process as well as preparing annual and daily plans . So it is expected that the role relationship between the cooperative teacher and the student teacher should be that of a model, a motivator, a friend and a supervisor. (Fish, 1995, Potthoff and Alley, 1996).

Edith (1994) examined the student teaching experience from the perspective of the cooperative teachers. He revealed that changes fell into the following categories; new curricular content mater-ial, they learn and adopt new pedagogical methods and concepts, they add new strategies or tactics for motivation, prese-ntation, and they improve their immediate teaching practices as a response to the daily presence of the student teacher.

Edigar (1990) mentioned that cooperative teachers might effect student teaching to achieve such desirable outcomes of the instruction as learning activities, skills, knowledge and Class-room administration.

Davis and Hall (1995) examined the role relationship that developed between a cohort of cooperating and student teachers of Spanish high school during a ten-week student teaching practicum.The study concluded that student teachers that formed reciprocal relationship perceived their cooperating teachers and practicum experiences more positively than those who formed only complementary relatio-nships did.

Conner and Killer (1995) conducted a study consisting of 307 senior level student teachers and 78 cooperative teachers offered information about skills that work successfully in the student teaching relationship, their study also revealed that C/T effected the ability to communicate and to provide feedback and sharing in their internal and external resources. Additional characteristics would include the ability to provide a supportive environment, organization, enthusiasm, pedagogical knowledge and felxibliblity as well as, improving the S/T teaching experience.

Nerenz (1979) studied the roles of University supervisors, cooperating teac-

hers and student teachers. The sample of his study consists of ten participating university foreign language supervisors, fifteen cooperating teachers, and fifteen student teachers at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His study showed that the teacher role was seen as the most important, followed by the coordinator.

Kalekin and Kornfeld (1999) conduc-ted a questionnaire to study the kinds of characteristics that cooperative teachers and student teachers in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. They found that both groups of teachers valued the roles that exemplified what they termed " interpersonal relationships" over " technical profossionalism " .

Angelina and Priscilla (1996) conduc-ted a study on 79 cooperating schools in Hong Kong aimed at collecting the views of cooperative teachers and student teachers on the support provided by the cooperative teachers in facilitating the Professional development of the student teachers. Their study revealed that cooperative teachers are the first teachers that student teachers observe from the other side of the desk, and the selection of the cooperative teachers should be done with great care and caution.

Tatel (1994) conducted a qualitative research, based on interviews with 30 secondary-level cooperating teachers, and examined the student teaching experience from the perspective of the cooperative teacher. In the interviews, cooperating teachers identified many changes in their own classroom practices that occurred as a result of their experiences with student teachers. Changes fell into the following categories: (1) teachers include new curricular content material; (2) they learn and adopt new pedagogical methods and concepts; (3) they add new strategies or tactics for motivation, presentation asse-ssment to their "teacher bag of tricks"; and (4) they improve their immediate teaching practices as a response to daily presence in the classroom of the student teacher. Excerpts from the interviews are included and many give special examples of ways teachers improved because of their experience supervising student teachers. Though, the results of Edith (1994), Edgar (1990) and Davis and Hall (1995) agreed on some of the variables in their studies in terms of the roles of the cooperative teachers such as; the ability to provide the student teacher with feedback, offer information and kno-wledge and help them in the pedagogical knowledge that is essential for those student teachers.

Practicum in Jordan

According to a thinker in ancient history, learning or education was the third eye of man which gives him an insight into all affairs and teaches him how to act, and it leads him to all round progress and prosperity. The line of progress and prosperity anywhere is the teacher and the learner. So teachers are viewed as the core of the incomes of the instructional process and the educational systems' matrix. (Ministry of Education, 1995; Aggarwal, 1997, Al-Nabhan and Al-Khateeb 1996, Abu Jabir and Baarah 1999).

Jordan is one such country that has changed because of the new trends. It gives a lot of attention to the preparation and qualification of teacthers cognitively and psychologically. To conform to these trends, Ministry of Education held the first educational reform conference in September (1987) in which an overview of the educational outcomes and varaibles was discussed with some concentration on the teachers' position.

As a result of this, faculties of educational sciences were established at the Jordanian formal universities. The responsibility of those universities is to prepare, qualify and train prospective teachers. Therefore, a field, and a class teacher have emerged.

Practicum is viewed as the most crucial element of the educational preparation and as the period where the learner is to be taught how to instruct, implement and apply all theories and new techniq-ues, that he had learnt and acquired into actual use (Al-khuli 1995; Schmitz 1996). The educational practicum program is to develop the student- teachers' knowledge and teaching competence.

The Cooperative teacher

The cooperative teacher is a teacher, who is officially appointed at school, and he is the teacher of the syllabus in the cooperative school who helps, guides, and supervises the student teacher during his/her practice in the school. In reality, the cooperative teacher is an elder colleague of the student teacher and has been a student teacher before (Tony, 1987). So he affects the student teacher psychologically and functionally either positively or negativity.

In this study, the cooperative teacher is the teacher who is officially appointed in the schools of the Ministry of Education and teaches English.

The Student Teacher

A student teacher is the most important participant in the practicum program. The success of the practicum program depends on his / her ability to successfully interact with the school environment and the actual teaching situation. The student teacher is the senior class teacher or the field teacher who is being trained in learning and teaching during his educational practice program (Abd Al-Aziz 1997;Wray 1993).

In this study, the student teacher is the English senior field teacher who is practicing at schools for two days every week.

Purpose of the study

The Purpose of this study is to investigate the most effective roles of the English language cooperative teacher as viewed by student teachers in the southern District of Jordan; Specifically the study tries to answer the following questions:

1- What are the most effective roles that cooperative teachers practice?

2- Is there a significant difference in roles that cooperative teacher's practice due to gender?

Population

All teachers of English language in Al-karak Educational Directorate and all seniors of English language field teachers in the academic year 2000 / 2001.

Sample

The sample of this study comprises (15) teachers of English language whose experience in the Ministry of Education is between 3-10 years, and (35) seniors of English language field teachers who practice their practicum in the schools of Al-karak Educational Directorate during the second semester 2000 /2001.

Research Instrument and Producers

This study is launched to reveal the roles of the cooperative teachers as viewed by their student teachers. To reveal those roles, the researcher designed a questionnaire of (6) domains compris-ing (60) items through asking and open question "what are the roles that cooper-ative teacher practice in your cooperative school?" to a pilot study of (40) students. In case of validation, the questionnaire

was submitted to specialists; (4) prof-essors of teaching English as a foreign / second language and (4) cooperative teac-hers and (3) English language super-visors. The specialists were asked to evaluate the clarity and the appropriate-ness of the domains and their items, also jury were asked to add or delete any domain or item. The questionnaire in its final shape consisted of (6) domains of (40) items (appendix 1).

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study consisting of (15) cooperative teachers and (15) student teachers was conducted; (0.869) for the first domain, (0.7406) for the second, (0.845) for the third, (0.845) for the fourth, (0.888) for the fifth and (0.920) the sixth. The reliability of the questionnaire was (0.916), which is appropriate for conducting this study (Anastasi 1992).

Results of the Study

The researcher presents the results of the investigation of the roles those English language cooperative teachers' practices as perceived by field teachers of English language during their practice in the cooperative schools. Table (1) shows the basic description of the roles of the cooperative teachers as perceived by their students teachers.

Table (1) description of the cooperative teachers' roles

Teachers' Role	Min.	Max.	Means	Std deviation	No.of Items
Teacher	١,٢٩	٤,٧١	٢,١٧	.٥٢١	٧
Coordinator	١,٤٣	٣,٧١	٢,٢٨	.٤٧٦	٧
Counselor	١,٥٧	٤,٠٠	٢,٣٤	.٤٨١	٧
Curriculum	١,٥٠	٣,٣٣	٢,٣٧	.٣٨٧	٦
Evaluator	١,٠٠	٣,٨٣	٢,١٨	.٦٣١	٦
Friend	١,٤٣	٣,٢٩	٢,١٤	.٤٤٨	٧
Total					٤٠

For examining the domains, results showed that the teacher roles as curriculum specialist obtained the highest means (2.37). Whereas, the lowest role is the friend role (2.14). Meanwhile teach-ers' roles as teachers obtained (2.17). They are almost equal.

Table (2) Descending ranking of the cooperative teachers' roles based on means

Teachers' Role	Means	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Curriculum Specialist	٢,٣٧	.٣٨	١,٥٠	٣,٣٣
Counselor	٢,٣٤	.٤٨	١,٥٧	٤,٠٠
Coordinator	٢,٢٨	.٤٧	١,٤٣	٣,٧١
Evaluator	٢,١٨	.٦٣	١,٠٠	٣,٨٣
Teacher	٢,١٧	.٥٢	١,٢٩	٤,٧١
Friend	٢,١٤	.٤٤	١,٤٣	٣,٢٩

Table (2) presents the ordinal scale of the roles of the cooperative teachers as viewed by English field student teachers. The table also shows that the most effective role that cooperative teachers implement at schools is the curriculum specialist where the means were (2.37) then the counselor role where the means were (2.34). The coordinator and the evaluator come after as their means were (2028), then as a teacher where the means were (2.17), finally the role as a friend, where the means were (2.14). Table (3) shows the means and standard deviation of the cooperative teachers' roles as effected by gender.

Table (3) Distribution of Means and Standard deviation of the cooperative teachers' roles as effected by gender

Gender	Means & Std dev.	Coordinator	Counselor	Curriculum Specialist	Evaluator	Friend
Female	Means	2.27	٢,٤٦	٢,٣٤	٢,٢٨	٢,١١
	Std dev.	48	.٥٠	.٤١	.٦٢	.٤٨
	No.	23	٢٣	٢٣	٢٣	٢٣
Male	Means	2.28	٢,٢١	٢,٣٩	٢,٠٨	٢,١٧
	Std dev.	.47	.٤٤	.٣٧	.٦٣	.٤١
	No.	27	٢٧	٢٧	٢٧	٢٧
Total	Means	2.28	٢,٣٤	٢,٣٧	٢,١٨	٢,١٤
	Std dev.	.47	.٤٨	.٣٨	.٦٣	.٤٤
	No.	50	٥٠	٥٠	٥٠	٥٠

Table (3) shows that there is no effect attributed to gender.

Table (4) ANOVA results of teachers' roles by gender

	Sum of Squares	df		Mean Square	F	Sig.
Coordinator	Between Groups	4.791E-04	1	4.791E-04	.002	.964

	Within Groups	11.122	48	.232		
	Total	11.122	49			
Council	Between Groups	.615	1	.615	2.748	.104
	Within Groups	10.736	48	.224		
	Total	11.351	49			
Curriculum	Between Groups	2.771E-02	1	2.771E-02	.181	.672
	Within Groups	7.337	48	.153		
	Total	7.364	49			
Evaluator	Between Groups	.514	1	.514	1.296	.261
	Within Groups	19.033	48	.397		
	Total	19.547	49			
Friend	Between Groups	3.978E-02	1	3.978E-02	.194	.662
	Within Groups	9.876	48	.205		
	Total	9.876	49			
Teaching	Between Groups	2.130E-02	1	2.130E02	.077	.783
	Within Groups	13.320	4849			
	Total	13.347				

Table (4) shows that there is no statistical difference in the cooperative teachers' roles at α = (0.05).

Discussion of the Results

The aim of this study is to investigate the roles of the English language coopera-tive teachers as viewed by English field student teachers in Al-Karak Educational Directorate. So, the results related to the first question concerning the most effect-ive roles of the cooperative teacher based on table (2) show that the highest role is the curriculum specialist (2.37), which is attributed to many factors; teachers are following the traditional approach, where teachers are dominating the classroom sessions, which requires a teacher who is aware of the curriculum before starting teaching, so that his teaching should be effective from the traditionalists point view, as well as, to be pointed as a teacher in the Ministry of Education demands a highly knowledgeable person. Also, universities emphasize knowledge, analysis , designing curricula and testing.

While preparing prospective teachers, as well as evaluating their teaching productivity, educational supervisors usu-ally pay much attention to teachers' com-prehension of the curriculum. Where as, as a counselor, the cooperative teacher has the second rank, this is due to the nature of the student teachers who are not well experienced in teaching, because they have studied many courses theoreti-cally rather than practically. Therefore, they look at the cooperative teacher as a counselor because he is well experienced in teaching. On the other hand, in order for the cooperative teacher to be a couns-elor, there should be a warm friend relati-onship between the cooperative teacher and the student teacher.

However the study showed that the role of the cooperative teacher as a friend is the lowest because the cooperative teacher does not try to build such relation because cooperative teachers participate in evaluating their student teachers, as

well as, because student teachers don't spend much time at their cooperative schools. In accordance with the roles of the cooperative teachers as teachers and evaluators, those roles are almost the same, because evaluation is part of teaching, also, because student teachers think about themselves as effective teachers who have gained ways and techniques of teaching that may promote their performance and help them to implement their teaching roles effectiv-ely. But the role of the cooperative teach-er as a coordinator scores the middle rank because this is part of the cooperative teachers' role, where he is responsible for arranging the visits and providing stude-nts teacher with feedback. So, results of this study were confirmed by the results of the study conducted by Kalekin and Kornfeld (1999) and Conner and Killer (1995).

The results, related to the second question concerning the differences due to gender, showed that there is no statistical difference due to gender. This is attributed to the same amount of experience, the same techniques and strategies that both males and females are exposed to while preparing themselves at the university.

Didactic-Methodological Recommendations

In the light of the study, the following suggestions and recommendations are proposed;

1- Student teachers should begin teaching practice starting from the middle of their teacher-training university program.

2- Student teachers should participate in evaluating and organizing pract-ice teaching program.

3- Professors of the courses of teacher education should take part actively not only in the formulation of the curricula, but also, in the configure-tion and organization of teaching practice, because student teachers have to apply the knowledge they acquire during courses.

4- There is a need for the whole local community, the teachers, and the learners, the parents and school to be involved in preparing well-educated prospective teachers.

5- There should be divers and comprehensive methods of training used with all learners regardless of their gender, major, cumulative average and place of training.

6- Cooperative teachers should be rewarded financially and consider-ing their cooperation as a part of their c.v...

7- Good connection should be built between cooperative teachers and the educational supervisors at the university.

8- There should be initial conferences and meetings between the coopera-tive teachers and their students teachers from time to time.

9- All parties concerned must reconsi-der the way cooperative teachers should be selected.

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Appendix (1)

No	Role Relationship	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undeci-ded	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Curriculum Specialist Role					
١	Conducts training sessions in curriculum, evaluation and implementing curricula.					
٢	Pays attention to improve the teaching-learning situations.					
٣	Provides feedback					
٤	Conducts research.					
٥	Determines the educational needs in accordance with educational issues in the community.					
٦	Acts as the community's professional representative to forums and conventions.					
	EVALUATOR ROLE					
١	Evaluates the S/T needs.					
٢	Evaluates the S/T knowledge of the subject matters.					
٣	Evaluates the S/T performance.					
٤	Protects the S/T from the incompetence of the lack of the information.					
٥	Cooperates with the supervisor to evaluate the S/T.					
٦	Supervises S/T roles in the classroom.					
	FRIEND ROLE					
١	Acts nicely and cares for the S/T.					
٢	Shows basic interest in					

	the S/T personal life.					
٣	Thinks of S/T's situation.					
٤	Develops feelings of confidence and security.					
٥	Guides the S/T and motivates him.					
٦	Helps S/T to put remedial plans for weak students.					
٧	Helps S/T liaise with other teachers.					
	Teacher Role					
١	Provides the S/T with opportunities for the practice of techniques and activities before the practicum.					
٢	Models a commitment to teaching.					
٣	Models amastry of the content and the techniques.					
٤	Provides the S/T with appropriate professional growth once they leave the university community.					
٥	Makes S/T aware of the placements and job opportunities in a variety of fields.					
٦	Guides S/T to plan classroom activities.					
٧	Helps S/T to learn from lesson observation and related activities.					
	COORDNATOR ROLE					
١	Arranges a regular visitation program.					
٢	Requires regular observations.					
٣	Provides the suitable critiques.					

٤	Gives the start of beginning.					
٥	Enhances the corporation between the university personnel and the practicum center.					
٦	Anticipating both the S/T and the students interests, philosophies, personalities and expectations.					
٧	Schedule different kinds of activities for S/T during the teaching practice period.					
	COUNSELOR ROLE					
١	Helps the S/T to make and evaluate professional decisions.					
٢	Helps the S/T to develop occu-pational behaviors, a teaching style and a philosophy.					
٣	Undertakes major changes in the S/T personality, self-concept, and vision of others.					
٤	Concerned with minor changes in the psychological adjustments.					
٥	Helps S/T to build files with resources of materials.					
٦	Shows suitable ways of motivation and reinforcement.					
٧	Provide S/T with personal support when needed.					